



Representing the communities of Agoura, Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Encino, Hidden Hills, Lake Sherwood, Malibu, Oak Park, Pacific Palisades, Port Hueneme, portions of Sherman Oaks, portions of Oxnard, Santa Monica, Tarzana, Topanga, portions of Westlake Village, and Woodland Hills

**June 2010**



L-r: Asm. Julia Brownley, Rachelle Lefevre, Rosario Dawson, Amy Smart

## **First-in-the-Nation Single-use Bag Ban Advances**

Single-use bags are an environmental scourge. An estimated 19 billion bags are carried by wind and water to blight our landscape, and kill and maim marine life that mistakes them for food. Only about five percent of plastic bags are properly recycled. I'm pleased to report that my bill, AB 1998, passed out of the Assembly this month and is now awaiting action in the Senate, AB 1998 will make California first in the nation to enact a statewide ban. It will be effective in 2012.

## **Statewide Rallies Oppose Resumption of Whaling**

In 1982, when most whale populations had been hunted to near extinction, the International Whaling Commission ("IWC") declared a ban on further commercial whaling. This was a huge conservation victory, backed by President Reagan when the ban was passed and by each subsequent President. Even in spite of the ban more than 30,000 whales have been killed. Regrettably, three years ago, President Bush proposed to lift the ban, which is, so far, also supported by President Obama.

In a massive expression of protest, rallies were held up and down the length of California on May 23. I participated in the rally at the Ventura Harbor. There is no justification whatsoever for the resumption of the whale hunts, nor any need for any dead whale products. The IWC is scheduled to vote this month on the proposal to resume the hunt. It is my fervent hope that they do the right thing and refuse.



# Assembly Releases "California Jobs Budget"

The State budget process moves forward with the release on May 25 by the State Assembly of the *California Jobs Budget*, a new proposal to solve California's budget deficit, while also creating private sector jobs and preventing devastating cuts to schools, public safety and the state's social safety net. I believe that the Jobs Budget matches the priorities of the people of California, and reflects what we heard from thousands of citizens across the state who participated in over 50 public hearings and workshops over the past several months.

The *California Jobs Budget* closes the state's \$17.9 billion General Fund shortfall and ends the year with a prudent \$1 billion "rainy day" reserve. The centerpiece is a \$10.1 billion Jobs and Economic Stability Fund that will protect against the loss of 430,000 private-sector, local community and school jobs that are contained in the Governor's May Budget Revision. It will also generate tens of thousands of new jobs. It provides \$1.5 billion for targeted jobs initiatives, repays debts to local governments and schools to avoid massive layoffs, and maintains critical employment services and training programs that get people back to work and off government aid.

## THE JOBS PACKAGE:

- **Puts job creation and protection first.**

We invest in job training programs at California community colleges for unemployed job seekers.

- **Protects critical education dollars.**

We reject \$3 billion in devastating cuts to education proposed by the Governor, and instead meet the Proposition 98 guarantee and put a stop to the endless cuts to K-12 and Higher Education that are putting our future workforce at risk.

- **Rejects phony cuts to the safety net.**

We reject the slashing of safety net programs by the Governor, which would actually cost the state more, and instead maintain welfare-to-work, childcare, and cost-effective alternatives to expensive nursing homes.

- **Includes no new broadbased tax increases.**

We delay corporate loopholes that will generate over \$2 billion and finally close the California Oil Severance Tax loophole. Thanks to their power and influence in Sacramento, California oil companies do not pay the oil severance tax required by law in every other oil-producing state in the nation. This includes Texas and Alaska, with Governor Palin having raised Alaska's rate to 25% before leaving office. There is no rationality to California's oil companies enjoying windfall profits by paying nothing to California to the severe detriment of essential California services. In a global oil market, this will have zero impact on gas prices at the pump.

***How would you balance the budget?  
What are your priorities?***

<http://www.nextten.org/budgettool/site/thesim/flashcheck.html>

## Lawsuit Filed Demanding Equitable School Funding

Our schools have taken a budget beating year after year as California continues to struggle with the national economic downturn. One thing we can address in the meantime is the need for a more equitable school financing system, which I've been working on since being elected to the Assembly. I've held multiple hearings and carried legislation to overhaul our unfair system so that funding streams can be directed where they are needed most, including my bill AB8 last year, which the Governor vetoed.



Last month, schools finally had enough and the California School Boards Association, the Association of California School Administrators, and the State PTA filed a lawsuit calling for the court to "declare the State's education finance system unconstitutional and order the State to design an educational finance system to fulfill its constitutional duty to all children in California."

I'm sorry that it's come to this, and that California now faces costly litigation at the worst time since the Great Depression, all because Sacramento has failed to take any significant steps to radically reform our ailing education system. But we have to do better. This may finally be what it takes.

## Some Good News: Five New California Distinguished Schools!

As a passionate education advocate, there are few things that make me happier than to see schools in the 41<sup>st</sup> AD achieve a high level of excellence. In April, I learned that five schools in all parts of my district achieved "**2010 California Distinguished School**" status. Warmest congratulations to Brookside Elementary in Oak Park, McKinley Elementary in Santa Monica, Pt. Dume Elementary and Webster Elementary in Malibu, and Serrania Avenue Elementary in Woodland Hills.

Special thanks and credit is owed to the dedicated and hard working teachers, principals, parents and support staff at these outstanding schools who guided and inspired their students, and achieved this proud academic recognition.



## **Another 200+ Acres of Open Space Acquired**

For at least 20 years a majestic hill at the intersection of the 101 freeway and Malibu Canyon Road has been coveted by all the area park agencies. Driving westbound on the 101 freeway from the San Fernando Valley out of Calabasas and dropping into the Conejo Valley, this expanse of hillside is the iconic view, telling people they are entering a place where the rural landscape all around it is still valued. Previously slated for commercial development, it was ultimately acquired by Fred Sands, founder of Fred Sands Realtors, who has just sold it to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy as permanent open space. In these tight fiscal times for park agencies, our visionary L.A. County Supervisor, Zev Yaroslavsky, identified County Sanitation District funding that made the purchase possible since the Calabasas landfill is immediately adjacent to the property. On June 19, it was formally dedicated to Zev as the "*Las Virgenes Highlands Park.*" Congratulations Zev! And thanks to all who helped make this happen.

## **Senior Congress Summit**

I also enjoyed speaking to an audience of seniors at Oxnard College this month hosted by County Supervisor John Zaragoza and the Congress of California Seniors. It was particularly designed to protect seniors from scams and other kinds of fraud that is often directed at older and more vulnerable citizens.

I shared a little of what's going on with the state budget that will impact seniors, and my concerns about the Governor's proposed cuts to the state's safety net. Specifically, the In-Home Supportive programs that allows people to stay in their homes with assistance and thus out of far more costly nursing homes; Adult Day Health Care; the Alzheimer's Day Care Resource Center; Respite and Senior Companion community based services; and Caregiver Resource Centers. It is very frustrating to me to see the Governor's budget slash humane and caring programs like these while corporate loopholes and oil company profits remain off limits. The Assembly's "California Jobs Budget" would protect all of these safety net programs.



## Pierce College Commencement

I was privileged to be asked to deliver the commencement speech to the graduates of Pierce College earlier this month, and to let them know how important their decision to continue their education beyond high school will be, both to their futures and to the future of California. It is estimated that our state will need a million more college-educated workers by 2025. I believe it is both fiscally smart and a moral obligation of those of us in the Legislature to make a meaningful and

ongoing investment in higher education. And I encouraged the graduates to incorporate some aspect of public service into their lives as one of the ways in which they will be remembered. Congratulations Pierce College Class of 2010!

## Committee to Bridge the Gap Celebrates 40 Years

In April of 1970, following President Nixon's announcement that the U.S. had invaded Cambodia, young people around the country were galvanized into action. Colleges were shut down and massive protests staged. The country witnessed the tragic shooting by National Guard soldiers into a group of student demonstrators at Kent State, killing four and wounding nine, triggering a generation "gap" between young activists and the establishment.

A group of students and faculty at UCLA formed the "Campus Committee to Bridge the Gap," which began 40 years of activism on issues related to peace, human rights, school desegregation, health care, and other issues. They soon focused on the nuclear arms race and associated issues of atomic power and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Dan Hirsch had just graduated from Harvard University, traveling to L.A. on a \$250 check from legendary peace activist and Jesuit priest, Daniel Berrigan. Dan was a co-founder of Bridge the Gap and has been its President for all 40 years, writing, teaching, serving as an expert on nuclear policy issues in countless efforts, and providing expert testimony before



Congress on nuclear matters. The list of major Bridge the Gap successes is long and of enormous consequence in the fight for a safer and more just society.

This month, the Committee to Bridge the Gap celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It was an opportunity for me to thank Dan for his tireless efforts as my partner in Sacramento getting SB990 passed in 2007 over the fierce opposition and political might of the Boeing Company. SB990 now sets a very high standard for the cleanup of the radioactively and chemically contaminated Santa Susana Field Laboratory which is owned by Boeing. Dan is a true environmental hero, with deep roots in the work for civil rights and social justice. Warmest congratulations and with my most sincere gratitude for all that you have done, Dan, and to the Committee to Bridge the Gap.



Asm. Julia Brownley and General Manager Wendy Radwan

## ***Taxi! Taxi!* Wins California Small Business Award**

On May 25<sup>th</sup> the California Small Business Association, a nonprofit organization that advocates on behalf of small business, held its annual California Small Business Awards in Sacramento. This year CSBA asked legislators to select a small business from their districts with strong leadership in the field of environmental excellence. I was pleased to nominate ***Taxi! Taxi!***, and their General Manager Wendy Radwan, as the honoree from the 41<sup>st</sup> Assembly District. Having served the community for nearly 20 years, ***Taxi! Taxi!*** is the largest and oldest, locally-owned and operated taxicab company in Santa Monica. In 2007, it was the first cab company in L.A. County to debut hybrid cabs. ***Taxi! Taxi's***

hybrids save over 700 tons of toxic GHGs from polluting our planet and over 60,000 gallons of gasoline annually. In addition, their paperless dispatching system saves close to one million sheets of paper annually. I am proud to have had the opportunity to recognize ***Taxi! Taxi's*** environmental stewardship and thank them for their conscientious business practices.

## ***Committee and Legislative Appointments***

Chair, Assembly Education Committee  
Chair, Select Committee on Higher Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century  
Chair, Select Committee on Cleanup of Santa Susana Field Laboratory

Member:  
Assembly Budget Committee  
Assembly Judiciary Committee  
Assembly Natural Resources Committee  
Budget Subcommittee #2 – Education Finance  
Budget Subcommittee #4 – State Administration  
Select Committee on Community Colleges  
Select Committee on Domestic Violence  
Select Committee on Improving State Government  
Select Committee on Lowering California’s High School Dropout Rates  
Select Committee on Ports  
Joint Select Committee on Reform

Member, State Allocation Board  
California Commission on the Status of Women

Legislative Liaison, Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission  
Legislative Participant, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy

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